
NEWS RELEASE

Judd Gregg

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Friday, March 21, 2003

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GREGG AMENDMENT SIGNIFICANTLY BOOSTS SPECIAL EDUCATION DOLLARS

WASHINGTON- U.S. Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, today commended the work of his colleagues on committing to put special education funding on a direct glide path to full funding. In an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 88-11, the Senate adopted Gregg's amendment to provide \$3.29 billion in additional funds for Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) bringing funding for IDEA grants to states to over \$11 billion in FY 2004 and over \$13.5 billion in FY 2005 or 26% of all special education costs.

The Senate Budget Resolution already included a \$1 billion increase for IDEA through Fiscal Year (FY) 2009. Senator Gregg's amendment adjusts the discretionary funding caps in the first two years of the budget blueprint to place the budget on a glide path to full funding by FY 2009. The Senate version of the blueprint now proposes an increase of \$6.7 billion for IDEA—\$2.2 billion in FY 2004 and an additional \$4.5 billion in FY 2005—thereby putting Congress on a realistic path to fully funding its promise of 40% of all special education costs.

Senator Gregg commented, "This Budget Resolution demonstrates that the Senate is committed to making sure that the federal government keeps its promise to paying its fair share of special education costs, as promised back in 1975. Passage of the Budget Resolution clearly demonstrates that the Senate leadership puts a high priority on meeting the needs of special education, and doing so in a fiscally responsible way."

The Budget Resolution also specifies that use of reserve funds of roughly \$200 million in FY 2004 and FY 2005 is contingent upon a reauthorization of the IDEA. Gregg continued, "I look forward to a comprehensive reform of the IDEA this year in the HELP Committee."

The cost of the Gregg amendment is offset by an across-the-board reduction in the overall budget.

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